

**LAND AT EAST FARM,
WINTERBOURNE MONKTON,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: SU 10300 71300

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

July 2012
Report No. 811

Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on land at East Farm, Winterbourne Monkton, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 103 713).

The archaeological works comprised the monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction of a new agricultural barn.

No archaeological features were present within the investigated area.

Three struck flints, of Neolithic-Bronze Age date, and a single sherd of Medieval pottery were recovered from the interface between the base of the ploughsoil and the top of the underlying natural deposits.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period from *c.* AD 1500 onwards.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43. Traditionally sub divided into; Palaeolithic – *c.* 500,000 BC to *c.* 12,000 BC; Mesolithic – *c.* 12,000 BC to *c.* 4,500 BC; Neolithic – *c.* 4,500 BC to *c.* 2,000 BC; Bronze Age – *c.* 2,000 BC to *c.* 800 BC; Iron Age – *c.* 800 BC to AD 43.

Romano-British

Term used to define the fusion of indigenous Iron Age traditions with invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated AD 43 to *c.* AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 28th and 29th May 2012 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at East Farm, Winterbourne Monkton, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 103 713). The work was commissioned by CB Cooper Partnership.
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2012). The WSI was based upon the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995), the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: *Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief and conforms to the specification set out in MoRPHE (English Heritage, 2006).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission has been granted for the construction of a new agricultural barn on land at East Farm (Planning Reference: E/2011/1613/FUL).
- 2.2 The site is located to the south of Winterbourne Monkton, immediately east of the A4361. The study area abuts the northern extent of the Avebury World Heritage Site; although the new barn is situated approximately 140m north of the World Heritage Site northern boundary.
- 2.3 The British Geological Survey describes the underlying geology as West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation And Zig Zag Chalk Formation – Undifferentiated. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>)
- 2.4 The site is situated in a landscape rich in archaeological remains and there are a number of significant heritage assets located within the vicinity of the development; a Neolithic long barrow, known as ‘The Shelving Stone’ is postulated to be located nearby, however, its exact location remains uncertain. In addition, there are a number of Scheduled and undesignated field systems, linear features and barrow cemeteries in the general locale.
- 2.5 The study area therefore contained the potential for archaeological finds, predominantly dating to the Prehistoric period. This did not prejudice the watching brief against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn this would allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed works.
- 3.2 These aims were to be achieved by the pursuit of the following specific objectives, as stated in the WSI:
- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site;
 - iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence which will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
 - iv) to determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The monitored groundworks comprised a mechanical strip of the footprint of the new barn. A machine excavated *sondage* was excavated along the eastern edge of the site in order to test the natural substrates.
- 4.2 All excavation was undertaken, under constant archaeological observation, by use of a mechanical excavator, which was equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Where potential archaeological features or deposits were present, they were manually investigated and, if necessary, recorded in accordance with the WSI. Spoil tips were scanned for unstratified finds. Any recovered archaeological artefacts were allocated a context reference number and retained. Modern artefacts were noted and discarded.

5 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The site was stripped down to the top of the underlying natural deposits at an average depth of 0.30m below Modern ground. The natural substrates comprised chalk with frequent patches of orange clay, which were sealed by a

thin skim of light brown clay natural drift deposits, up to 0.15m thick. These were directly overlaid by a dark brown loose clay silt (101), up to 0.30m thick, which probably represented former ploughsoil.

- 5.2 No archaeological features were present within the study area, however; three struck flints, of Neolithic-Bronze Age date, and a single abraded sherd of 13th Century *Laverstock Ware* pottery (1g) were recovered from the interface between the base of the ploughsoil and the top of the underlying natural deposits.
- 5.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Devizes Museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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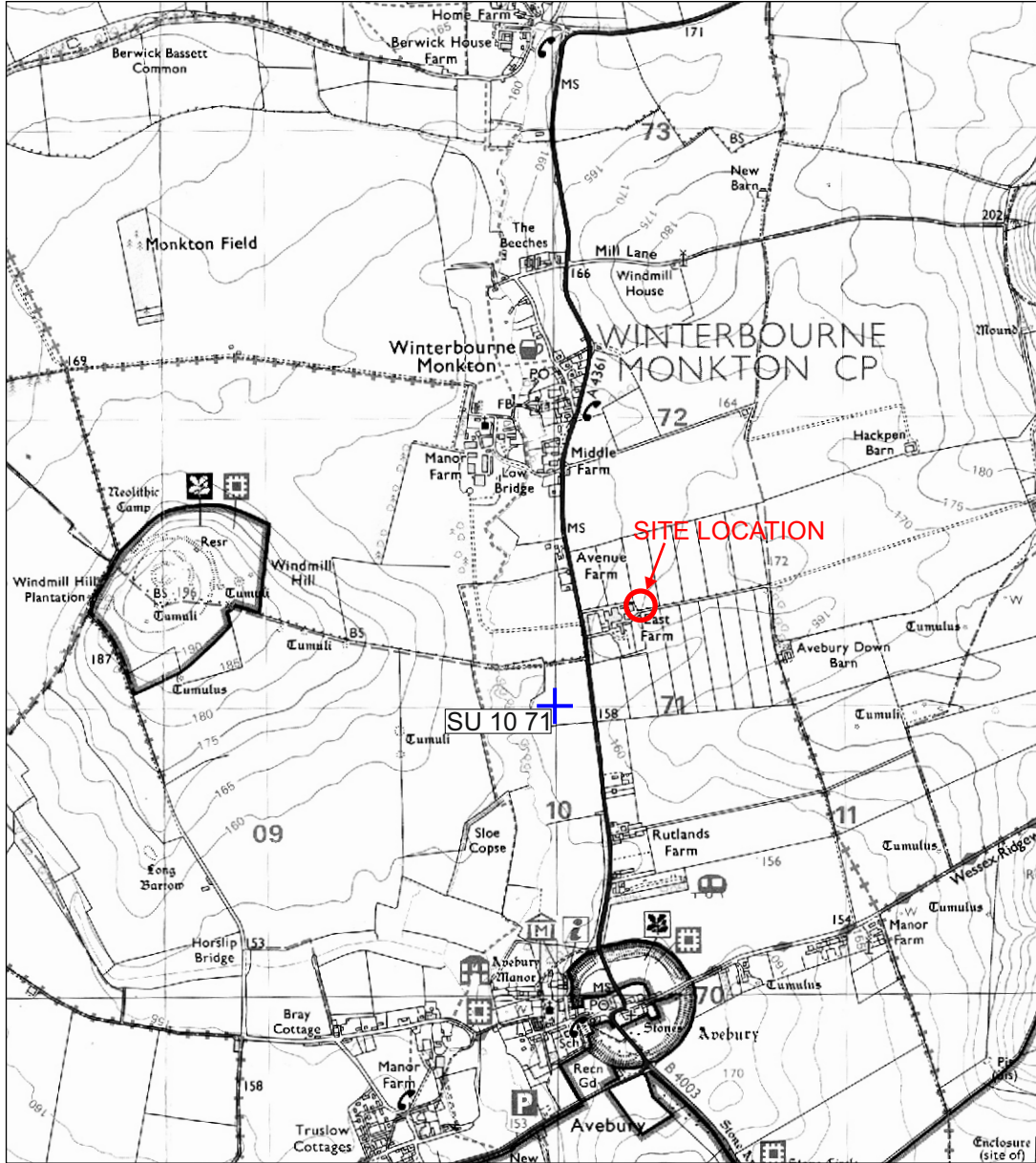
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7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FIGURE 1: Site Location